



# Wee Learn



## Wee Explorers (18 months - 3 years): Camping with Babies & Toddlers

For those of you that love camping and think it's impossible to do with young children or toddlers – we are here to tell you it's possible AND can be enjoyable for all! Camping is a great way for children to experience a true Canadian adventure, spend quality time with the family while learning about and exploring nature.

For each extra responsibility and chore that comes from camping with toddlers, there are the following: evening bonfires under a magnificent star-lit sky, endless dips in the lake and frolicking on a beach shore, the sticky-sweet promise of s'mores and toothy, gaping grins, falling asleep to the sound of water kissing rock and trees swaying with the gentle breeze.

Here are some tips from an expert, Selena Mills who takes her own small children camping and loves it!

- 1. Safety precautions:** Talk about all the new things you'll be doing and the new environment you'll be in before and during activities like hiking, or having bonfires, seeing snakes and lots of bugs and spiders, coming into contact with poison ivy, oak, and sumac. Remember to pack a sensible first aid kit with Band-aids, after-bite, hydrogen peroxide, Polysporin, arnica, your teething/fever medicine of choice, gauze, Q-tips, tweezers, etc.
- 2. Pack the "goop":** Pack LOTS of bug spray, sunscreen, after-bite and aloe vera gel. Don't forget lots of wipes, they will be indispensable!
- 3. Think Layers:** No matter what the Weather Network calls for, Mother Nature will have her unpredictable ways. Pack lots of comfy t-shirts and shorts, lots of wool socks, sun hats and wool hats, lots of jogging pants and long-sleeved pajama sets and comfy shoes. Water shoes if you're doing lots of beach action.
- 4. Comfy Beds:** Some say single air mattresses, but if you can bring a toddler-cot or toddler sleeping mats that would be better for your child. If you've done any camping you know that air mattresses deflate often and easily. Make it easier on yourself by only having to refill your own.
- 5. Food:** Plan your menu for camping trips in advance depending on if you have running water available, a camping stove or just an open fire. It is a fantastic idea to make a few things ahead of time. Chili, pasta sauces, slow-cooker fajita filling, slow-cooker anything really. Anything that freezes well and can defrost throughout the day for easy heating up at night! Bring lots of snack items that can be easily transported on hikes or to the beach. Be sure to bring travel cups/bottles to ensure fluids are easily accessible!
- 6. Fun and games:** Bring a new toy or book for each of your kids and their own personal flashlights. Keep it simple and cheap! If you have room for it and are going to the right environment, bring their balance bikes or trikes. You can make little art bins for each of them with their pencils, pastels, crayons, markers and a couple of big multi-media art pads. Another tip would be to pre-organize some easy craft ideas to do with them throughout the week and pack up a bigger art basket with all of that stuff. Glow-sticks, sparklers and bubbles should be mandatory. Stuff for an outdoor treasure hunt from the Dollar Store.
- 7. On Potty training and diapers:** I highly recommend bringing a potty if you are in the throes of potty-training. As for diapers, extra-large Ziploc bags my friends. You're going to want to keep the scent at bay until you get to dump them in a garbage.

Source: <https://bit.ly/2tpN5vW>

